



Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan

Advocates for Healthy Weight in Children

Testimony by:

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Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Steering Committee Chair

Sr. Director of Advocacy, American Heart Association

Committee on House Transportation

May 27, 2010

Chairperson Byrnes and members of the committee, I am here today to testify on behalf of the 110 member organizations of Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan (HKHM). The HKHM Initiative started in 2007 with a grant from the National Governor's Association through the Healthy Kids, Healthy America program. The organizations that are members of HKHM represent government, public and private sectors, school districts, health care and non-profit organizations. Our goal has been to advance and help implement a multi-year strategic policy plan to reduce childhood obesity in Michigan.

One of our policy priorities is to:

Advance incentives and legislation to apply Complete Streets/Safe Routes to School (SRTS)/Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), including safety of pedestrians and bicyclists when building, reconstructing, or rehabilitating public infrastructure.

Over the past 30 years, obesity rates have continued to increase rapidly across all age groups. Among children ages 6 -11, the national rate of childhood obesity has quadrupled. In Michigan, nearly \$3 billion is spent in annual medical costs treating obese adults. If these trends continue, the today's Michigan children may be the first generation to not have a longer life span than their parents.

Our coalition suggested the resolution you have before you today because of its potential to help reduce the trends in childhood obesity. We appreciate you taking it up and beginning to move it through the legislative process. We understand that you have additional legislation you are taking testimony on today that also relates to complete streets.

I'd like to highlight some of the ways we hope complete streets will help us turn the tide on the obesity epidemic. Certainly, complete streets will allow a safe and easy way for people to build activity into their daily lives. Many children and their families struggle with integrating physical activity into their daily routine. In 2007, data revealed that 64.6 percent of adults and 28.9 percent of children and adolescents are overweight or obese, due in large part to a lack of regular physical activity. This has become such a significant issue that the National Institute of Medicine recommends fighting childhood obesity by changing local ordinances and policies to encourage construction of sidewalks, bikeways, and other places for physical activity.



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Childhood obesity has been linked to changing land use patterns and lifestyle choice which decrease physical activity opportunities. One example of the importance of a built environment is that it makes it safe and easy for children to walk or, bike daily in their communities. In 1969, approximately 50 percent of children in the United States go to school by walking or biking, but in 2001 only 15 percent of students walked or bicycled to school. Students with access to sidewalks, bike paths and safe environments can add an average of 24 minutes of physical activity daily. When walking or biking to school becomes more feasible, students are more likely to walk and bike to school and their other favorite destinations.

Thank you for your time today. Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan appreciates the way you are part of Michigan's solution to turning the tide on childhood obesity. Together we can make a difference.



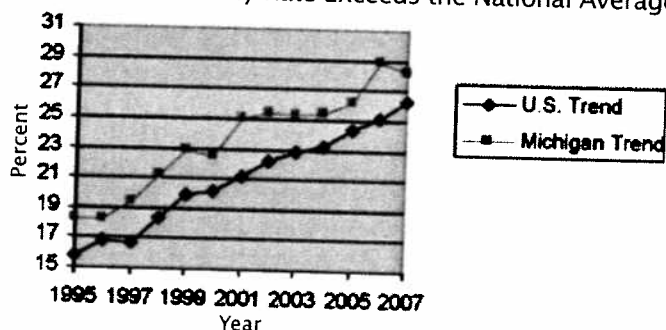
Fight Childhood Obesity: Increase Physical Activity with Complete Streets, Context Sensitive Solutions and Safe Routes to School.

"Physical activity is an efficient and powerful tool for preventing chronic diseases and for promoting health and well-being."
Source: American Journal of Health Promotion, 2007.

"It is dishonest to tell our citizens to walk, jog, or bicycle when there is no safe or welcoming place to pursue these life-saving activities."
Richard Jackson, M.D., Director of Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, 2001.

The Problem

Michigan's Adult Obesity Rate Exceeds the National Average



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2008.

greatly hindered by the lack of sidewalks and community design guided exclusively by the motor vehicle. Institute of Medicine, 2005.

- Physical inactivity projected health care costs for Michigan totaled \$12.7 billion in 2007. Physical activity reduces the risk of chronic diseases, thus decreasing the burden on Michigan's economy. Chenoweth, et al., 2003.

Did You Know?

- Complete Streets, Context Sensitive Solutions and Safe Routes to School- all improve public health, benefit the local economy and increase safety for everyone.
- Schools with non-motorized access routes can see a 15% increase in the number of students who walk or bike to school. This can add up to 24 minutes of physical activity a day for children. Active Living Research, RWJF 2007.



Definitions

Complete Streets: Roadways planned, designed and constructed to accommodate safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across streets which include sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes.

Safe Routes to School: An international movement that makes it more safe, convenient, and fun for children to walk or bike to school. The program encourages and educates children and parents about the benefits of walking or biking to school, as well as helping to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of initiatives that will improve the routes children travel to get to school.

Context Sensitive Solutions: A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. Context Sensitive Solutions is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.

Built Environment: Man-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity consisting of buildings, roads, sidewalks, and trails and other activities that change the natural environment.

Active Infrastructure: Built environment that facilitates physical activity.

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- Complete Streets provide children with opportunities to walk, bike and play in a safe environment. More children are likely to walk or bike to school when sidewalks are present and where there are safe street crossings. National Complete Streets, 2009.
- By including Complete Streets designs, communities have reported a range of \$171 million to \$963 million in benefits from increased revenue, increased tourism, and increased quality of life. Land Economics, 2000.
- Measures that design the street with pedestrians in mind- sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement, traffic calming measures, and treatments for disabled travelers- all improve pedestrian safety. National Complete Streets, 2009.

Solution

- The Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Initiative seeks systemic changes in schools, health care and communities that can address childhood obesity. Implementing Complete Streets, Context Sensitive Solutions and Safe Routes to School principles in community design makes it easier to integrate physical activity into daily routines.
- Recognize all infrastructure as potential 'active infrastructure'.
- Support efforts to require Complete Streets, Context Sensitive Solutions, and Safe Routes to School principles by county and local road agencies to safely and systematically accommodate all users when planning, building, reconstructing or rehabilitating infrastructure.

Resources

www.michigan.gov/hkhm

www.completestreets.org

www.saferoutesmichigan.org

www.contextsensitivesolutions.org

www.mihealthtools.org/Communities/



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www.michigan.gov/hkhm

Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan was initiated with a grant from the National Governor's Association through the Healthy Kids, Healthy America program. This program was designed to provide the nation's governors with the opportunity to address childhood obesity in schools and communities in their state.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan is working with executive-level decision-makers from government, public and private sectors, school districts, health care and non-profit organizations to create a multi-year strategic policy plan to reduce childhood obesity in Michigan. This policy plan will include targeted approaches and implementation plans to guide state leaders in adopting policies that will increase access to physical activity and healthy food choices, especially fruits and vegetables.

For more information, please contact:

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Chair, HKHM Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School Policy Action Team

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Advocates for Healthy Weight in Children

Members

- Allegiance Health
- Allegiance Health Department of Prevention & Community Health
- American Diabetes Association
- Ann Arbor YMCA
- Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
- Association of Child Development
- Bay-Arenac Intermediate School District
- BE-FIT, Inc.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Marquette & Alger Counties
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
- Chelsea Community Hospital
- Children's Health Initiative Program
- City Connect Detroit
- Center for Childhood Weight Management
- Community Health Committee of the Health Improvement Plan of Washtenaw County
- Community Health & Social Services Center, Inc.
- Comprehensive School Health Coordinators' Association
- Corner Health Center
- Crim Fitness Foundation
- Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center
- Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
- Eastern Michigan University, School of Health Promotion and Human Performance
- Eaton Intermediate School District
- Evolve Nonprofit
- Food System Economic Partnership
- Generation With Promise – Office of the Surgeon General
- Governor's Office of Community & Faith-Based Initiatives
- The Greening of Detroit
- Health Tank
- Healthy Environments Partnership
- Healthy Kids Healthy Futures Coalition of Macomb County
- Henry Ford Health System
- Huron Valley Physicians
- Lakeview School District
- League of Michigan Bicyclists
- Jackson Public Schools
- Joy – Southfield Community Development Corporation
- Macomb County Health Dept. – Nutrition Services
- Mayor's Time
- Medical Network One
- Marbec, Ltd.
- Michigan Apple Committee
- Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children
- Michigan Association of Local Public Health
- Michigan Association of Planning
- Michigan Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics
- Michigan Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
- Michigan Dental Association
- Michigan Dietetic Association
- Michigan Environmental Council
- Michigan Farm Bureau
- Michigan Farmers Market Association
- Michigan Food Policy Council
- Michigan 4C Association
- Michigan Grocers Association
- Michigan Head Start State Based TTA Office
- Michigan Osteopathic Association
- Michigan Pharmacist Association
- Michigan Podiatric Medical Association
- Michigan Primary Care Association
- Michigan Public Health Institute
- Michigan Recreation and Park Association
- Michigan State University, Department of Pediatrics and Human Development
- Michigan State University, Center for Economic Analysis
- Michigan State University, College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Michigan Suburbs Alliance
- Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance
- Oakland County Osteopathic Association
- Rowe Professional Services Company
- Spartan Stores
- St. Joseph Mercy Medical Group/Pediatrics
- Taylor School District
- Tom Rifai, MD, PC
- Tri-County Medical Society
- University of Michigan
- University of Michigan, Pediatric Comprehensive Weight Management Center
- University of Michigan, Project Healthy Schools
- Voices of Detroit Initiative
- Washtenaw County Public Health
- Wayne State University, Department of Pediatrics
- Wayne State University, Nutrition & Food Science
- Voices of Detroit Initiative

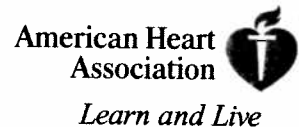


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Steering Committee

Altarum Institute
 American Cancer Society
 American Heart Association
 Michigan Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance
 Michigan Chapter of the American College of Cardiology
 Michigan Fitness Foundation
 Michigan Health & Hospital Association
 Michigan Soft Drink Association
 Michigan State Medical Society
 University of Michigan, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital



Ex-officio Steering Committee Members

- Education Policy Action Team
- Community Policy Action Team
- Health, Family and Child Care Policy Action Team
- Michigan Department of Agriculture
- Michigan Department of Community Health
- Michigan Department of Education
- Michigan Department of Human Services
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth

Partners

- Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians
- Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
- Michigan State University, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems
- Beaumont Hospitals, Community Affairs
- Meijer
- National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, Inc.
- Physician's Health Plan
- Michigan State University Department of Pediatrics and Human Development
- Michigan Primary Care Association